

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Coronation Crescent, Madeley, Telford, TF7 5EJ

## Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because teaching is not consistently good or better across the school.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always make the progress they are capable of because the pace of learning is too slow.
- Teachers do not always set sufficiently challenging tasks, and good practice is not shared throughout the school.
- Although children in Reception make adequate progress, provision for children in the early years does not help children learn effectively through play.
- Leadership and management require improvement because the temporary school leaders have not been in post long enough to have brought about consistently good teaching throughout the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- As a result of stronger teaching, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are currently making good progress in their learning, and writing skills are particularly strong in these years.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well around the school and in lessons, even when the lessons move at a slow pace.
- The new acting headteacher and assistant headteacher work effectively together and in the short time they have been in school, their work is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning and the quality of the education provided.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons taught by four teachers.
- Five joint lesson observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read and scrutinised pupils' work in books and on display in classrooms and around the school.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, senior leaders and staff. The inspector talked to pupils throughout the inspection. He also met with representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including improvement plans and assessment data from the monitoring of pupils' progress. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils were scrutinised.
- The responses of three parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered.
- Questionnaire responses from 12 members of staff were taken into account.
- The school uses its own facilities and does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-size primary school.
- An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is greater than most primary schools.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to most primary schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes at both Key Stages 1 and 2.
- At the beginning of the current school year, an acting headteacher and an acting assistant headteacher joined the school in a temporary capacity. A newly-qualified teacher joined the school and a temporary part-time teacher works in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is a breakfast club for children attending the school, managed by the governing body.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly for younger pupils, so it is always at least good by:
  - ensuring that all learning tasks are well structured and have clear outcomes
  - ensuring that pupils' suggestions are taken into account and followed through
  - moving learning on at a good pace and ensuring that pupils are fully occupied at all times
  - disseminating the outstanding practice at upper Key Stage 2 throughout the school so that teaching in all classes benefits from the best features.
- Ensure there is good achievement throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 by making sure that:
  - work is sufficiently challenging so that pupils at all levels of attainment achieve their full potential
  - results of end of key stage national tests and assessments are consistent year on year
  - pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - improving the effectiveness of leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - planning activities that enable children to learn through productive play
  - ensuring the pace of learning is brisk and children are fully occupied at all times
  - improving the outdoor learning environment so opportunities for learning outside effectively support learning across all areas of learning.
- The governing body should ensure stability in leadership arrangements to support long-term planning for school improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' progress requires improvement if their achievement is to become at least good. Although pupils make better progress during their later years at school, their overall progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is not yet as good as it could be because of variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding similar to those expected for their age. Although standards at the end of Reception are average, their achievement requires improvement because the quality of leadership and teaching in that area is not consistently good.
- Attainment in reading, writing and in mathematics at the end of Year 2 has been average since the previous inspection and has shown an improving trend over the past few years. However, results in 2012 have shown a slight dip in pupils' attainment, so that achievement at Key Stage 1 now requires improvement. The school leadership team is aware of the issues and is taking action.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 were below average since 2009 and achievement required improvement. Due to effective action taken by the school, supported by the local authority, attainment in the most recent national tests and assessments rose significantly. No national data are available yet, but there is strong evidence that standards in English and mathematics are average.
- Work samples show good and often excellent progress in developing writing skills in Key Stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6. There is evidence of extended writing in a wide range of different styles and for different purposes. For instance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 very competently started preparing an autobiography of a famous author using a fact file. They showed good knowledge of grammar in their writing. Discussion confirmed they have a secure understanding of the different styles used in writing for a range of purposes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 used imaginative words to good effect when writing poems about their favourite foods.
- Year 2 pupils are developing a secure knowledge of letters and the sounds they make and use these skills to read unfamiliar words accurately. More competent readers are able to retell a story while those who find reading more challenging, use pictures to talk about their books. Older pupils in Year 6, read with confidence. More-able readers read with expression and are interesting to listen to. Pupils at all levels are able to talk about their books and clearly enjoy reading.
- The progress of pupils at different levels of ability and that of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the overall progress of other pupils. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium receive additional classroom support and resources that effectively helps their learning. The gap in results between these pupils and others is reducing steadily.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. They receive good support from the special needs coordinator and from specialist teaching assistants.

**The quality of teaching****requires improvement**

- Teaching is not consistently good because there is too much variation across the school. This means that pupils' progress is no better than expected. Teaching is most effective at Key Stage 2, where although it occasionally requires some improvement, the large majority is good or outstanding. Lower in the school teaching generally requires improvement and on occasions, some teaching is inadequate. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are not always directed well enough to ensure that they learn effectively through constructive play.
- Where teaching is less effective, teachers fail to provide pupils with tasks that have clear statements of what they are expected to learn. Teachers do not always use time efficiently and the slow pace is not quick enough to move pupils onto the next steps in learning quickly enough. For example, a group of children in Reception sat unoccupied and waited for too long whilst the teacher outlined learning to others. In other lessons, some activities do not result in new learning. For example, some children worked at meaningless tasks in a numeracy-based lesson, which did not build their knowledge and understanding of number. Teachers' questioning sometimes fails to pick up on pupils' ideas, and at times opportunities are missed to help them learn from their mistakes.
- Where teaching is more effective, pupils are able to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding quickly. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and tasks are challenging and effective in engaging pupils in their own learning. At the beginning of lessons, teachers make clear statements of what they expect pupils to learn and refer to these at appropriate moments, so that pupils are aware of how well they are progressing. Where teaching is good, teachers use questions well to make pupils think and to develop their knowledge and understanding. They build on what pupils already know in a well-structured way.
- Teachers manage behaviour well and lessons proceed without undue interruption. Support staff are active and contribute well to the progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and to that made by those pupils who attract the pupil premium. Classroom support staff are generally directed effectively, are informed of pupils' learning needs and have the skills to be able to meet these adequately.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils****are good**

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and an enthusiastic approach to taking on challenging tasks. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 tackled their mathematics problem-solving tasks with great enthusiasm. Even when pupils are left unoccupied, they wait patiently for direction.
- Older pupils are aware of their own progress and of their strengths and weaknesses in learning, as seen when Year 5 and 6 pupils assessed their own and others' writing. They are clear about their targets and the next steps. They feel they work well, individually and with others, and are pleased with their progress.
- Staff throughout the school apply a consistent approach in implementing the school's behaviour policy and this has resulted in consistently good behaviour. The few pupils with identified behavioural difficulties are making adequate progress in improving their behaviour. In lessons, they are supported well by adults who help them to be included into lessons where appropriate and work with them during independent work time so they cause the minimum disruption to others' learning. Case studies and inspection evidence such as lesson observations show that the school has been particularly successful at reintegrating pupils who have not settled well in other schools.

- Pupils are safe in school. They say bullying is rare and when necessary, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. They have a clear awareness of their own and others' safety. Good levels of pastoral support ensure that there is sensitive intervention for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well through the emphasis on good quality care, and equality and integration for everyone. They know the difference between right and wrong, make generally good choices and know they have to accept any consequences for poor ones. In lessons, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to think and reflect, for example on topics such as myself, friendship, memories and choices. Pupils work well together, respecting others' views and ideas and showing courtesy towards others.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- The school's leadership and management requires improvement because it is not totally effective in developing the quality of education. The headteacher and assistant headteacher have made a good start in identifying and tackling the school's areas for development. In cooperation with the governing body and the local authority, these senior leaders are tackling some difficult issues in order to improve provision, particularly the quality of teaching. However, both senior leaders are working in the school in a temporary capacity, and this limits their ability to introduce long-term plans for improvement.
  - Senior leaders regularly go round classrooms and sit in on lessons. This practice is having a positive impact on teaching at Key Stage 2, although good practice is not yet disseminated through the school. However, elements of outstanding teaching seen in Years 5 and 6 are evident in teaching for Years 3 and 4.
  - The senior leaders systematically check up on progress of all groups of pupils giving themselves and the governing body an accurate picture of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie and where focused attention needs to be directed. Teachers are beginning to make good use of year group information to review the progress of each individual pupil and to pitch work to an appropriate yet challenging level.
  - Leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not consistently good and requires improvement. The quality of teaching, including planning, is not always effective enough to ensure that children are learning as quickly as they could through their structured play. Some adults in the classroom find it difficult to direct children's play because they have not received clear directions or had the opportunity to view good practice. The school has not addressed the recommendation from the previous inspection regarding improvement to and more effective use of the outdoor area.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors work with the local authority and with senior leaders to lead the school in its endeavours to improve the quality of education and raise standards, although it has not yet secured a permanent senior leadership team for the school. The Chair of the Governing Body meets regularly with senior leaders and the local authority to evaluate the school's progress towards the targets set in the raising attainment plan. Members of the governing body ensure that legal duties, including safeguarding, are met. They check regularly to see that the pupil premium is allocated appropriately to support the pupils for who it is intended. This funding goes towards meeting the cost of the special needs coordinator and extra adults to meet these pupils' needs. The costs of trips and educational experiences for pupils entitled to claim free school meals and for children in local authority care, are subsidised. They have an appropriate knowledge of why staff are promoted and salaries are increased. They have an adequate

understanding of how good the quality of teaching is and how well monitoring is used to develop it.

- The local authority is effective in its support of the school. They have classed the school as one requiring some support and consequently, have produced, working with governors, a detailed plan to raise attainment. Their support has included the secondment of a teacher last year to successfully raise results at the end of Year 6. They have supported the current secondment, in conjunction with the diocese, of acting headteacher and assistant headteacher, following the retirement of previous senior staff.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123556
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	402176

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joan Beard
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Gilbert
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 March 2010
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